

I urge you to oppose the AT&T Comcast merger, which threatens the public interest principles that are essential to the Internet as an open and nondiscriminatory communications medium. The cable industry has long been characterized by anticompetitive local monopolies, restrictive control over content and services, high subscription rates and poor customer service. There is every reason to believe that these practices will be replicated in the combined company's control over high-speed Internet connections. AT&T Comcast will become a powerful media gatekeeper, leveraging its control over the network to exert undue influence over the evolution of broadband Internet content and services. The resulting lack of competition, innovation and diversity will harm both our economy and our democracy in the long run, with consumers left to bear the costs.

I urge that the merger between AT&T and Comcast be shot down. Allowing the merger will result in a vast majority of subscribers having a single gateway to the media landscape. Similar companies and other mega companies (AOL, TW and MS) have not shown that they will provide better pricing or programming to consumers and have continually shown hostile market practices. Cable prices have risen faster than the rate of inflation. AT&T Comcast would be and is in this same league with such companies. The combined ownership of stock and assets of the combined companies in programming sources is enough to throw warning signs that this deal would narrow the media landscape. If the bad TV shows are not enough, please do not help the further watering down of journalism into light entertainment and other such mainstreaming actions.